

MONDAY, December 22, 1851.

The Senate was called to order by the President pursuant to adjournment—prayer by the Rev. Mr. Baggerly—roll called—quorum present.

The journal of Saturday was read and adopted.

On motion of Mr. Sterne, the Senate took a recess until the hour should arrive for the inauguration of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor elect.

The hour for the inauguration having arrived, the Senate proceeded to the place designated for that purpose.

IN JOINT SESSION.

Roll called—quorum present.

The oath of office was then administered by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to P. H. Bell, Governor elect, who delivered the following address :

GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATURE,

AND FELLOW-CITIZENS :

By the generous confidence of the people of Texas, I am called upon to renew, to-day, in the presence of this enlightened assembly, the constitutional oath which two years ago was administered to me within this capitol. The exalted compliment which that confidence conveys, and the flattering manner in which it has been indicated, very naturally excites in me feelings of pride and satisfaction ; which, to indulge, is both grateful and consolatory. The honor conferred has created a debt of gratitude which, I fear, neither services nor sacrifices on my part will ever enable me to repay ; and there is no language which will adequately express to my fellow-citizens at large, the high appreciation I have placed upon their approval of my public acts, during the eventful period that I have had the honor to preside at the head of the State Government.

In again assuming the position of Chief Magistrate of the State, I am sensible of the weight of responsibility resting upon me, and of the elevated character of the duties it devolves. My notice is first directed to that Supreme Being whose aid and comfort I have ever sought, in every vicissitude and trial ; and who has so often vouchsafed his guardian care to our beloved country, by relieving her through his providential assistance from the perils and snares with which she has been encompassed, in her efforts to achieve and preserve social, political, and religious freedom. I now invoke His blessings upon our young State, and His aid in the consecration of the glorious in-

stitutions of our common country to Liberty and Independence forever.

Since my connection with the civil department, it has been impressively realized to me, that if there is one thing more than any other calculated to sustain the public servant, in his efforts faithfully to discharge his duties, it is the well-defined approbation of those whose agent he is. To the mind directed by honest impulses, it comes as a balm and a healing, to soothe and bind up the wounds which envy, malice, or ambition, sometimes seeks to inflict. Although as exempt, perhaps, as many others more meritorious than myself, occupying a similar position, from the poisoned arrows of vituperation, yet, I have not been entirely free from the noxious mists which error and misrepresentation have attempted to throw around the humble, ardent and honest exertions which I have devoted to the relief of our promising young State, in her comparatively new experiment of State organization. Of this, I do not complain; for it is a distinguishing characteristic of this glorious country of ours, guarantied by the constitutional charter under which our social and political rights are maintained, that individuals, measures, and parties, are equally the legitimate subjects of comment and criticism. It reflects much honor upon our citizens, that the "liberty of speech and of the press" seldom, if ever, are so far abused as to require an appeal to the statutory provisions of the land; the cause being traceable to that high-toned moral sentiment pervading our community, which sooner or later applies a much more potent and salutary check, than is to be found in the restraining penalties of the law; and if, as is declared in the political axiom, that "error ceases to be dangerous when truth is left free to combat it," it is far better to leave the privilege referred to unrestrained, in order to reveal useful and important facts, than attempt to close up the channels of intelligence; which, if left open and unimpeded, will often prove the medium of throwing off disguises, and of exposing to general view, the motives and acts of public agents, should they at any time manifest a desire to sacrifice the public weal to purposes of self-aggrandizement.

The events of the past two years associated with the operations of our State Government have been marked by more than ordinary interest. Many of the questions to be met and decided, contained from their very nature the elements of high excitement and disagreement, if not of discord. The people, the Legislature and the Executive, respectively, have had their own parts assigned them to act, in full view of these new and most im-

portant measures prior to their consummation; subjecting the country thereby to the severe ordeal of conflicting opinions, through which it could not safely pass but by a patriotic surrender of all sectional and selfish views to the one great and common object—that of preserving the interest of our State free from injury, and her integrity without a blemish. Amidst these conflicts of opinion, there has really been no diversity of interests, and it will now, as all passion has subsided, and reason is again permitted to resume her just prerogatives, be allowed that all desired the attainment of the same end, but by very different channels, and with antagonistic views in reference to its accomplishment.

Differing, as I have done as your Executive, with another important branch of the Government, and many of my fellow-citizens, in reference to several measures of vital importance, I can find no occasion more appropriate than the present to declare in great sincerity, that whatever diversity of opinion may exist in the legislative counsels, or amongst my fellow-citizens generally in relation to my official acts, or how various soever may be the estimates placed upon them, I have on all occasions been governed only by a strong, uncompromising conviction of what I considered to be my duty, coupled with a firm determination to perform it no matter what the inconvenience or hazard to myself; repudiating at all times, as far as it was in the power of weak humanity, that prejudice and passion so naturally springing from the speculations and conflicting theories touching the operations of Government so freely indulged, and which if not resisted, remain a stumbling block to the attainment of public justice, and are utterly subversive of good order, good feeling, and that harmony which should always distinguish public agents entrusted with important and sacred duties.

I have been careful freely to accord to others the same honesty of purpose and devotion to the best interests of the country that I claim for myself; I embrace this occasion further to remark, that to those of my fellow-citizens who have sustained me with a generous confidence and noble advocacy in the measures I have recommended, and the views which I have thought it my duty to promulgate, I now return my sincere thanks, the best tribute of a grateful heart. For those whose opinions have been adverse to my own, with an opposition characterized by manly independence, I entertain no feelings but those of respect and kindness. For others, who opposed my public course (with too much acrimony perhaps,) I have no censure, and nothing to urge, but respectfully request that they

will carefully revise, and if consistent with a liberal and ingenuous consideration of the error which inseparably attaches to us all, reverse the decision, originating no doubt in the purest intentions, but amidst excitement too strong for sound conclusions.

With these remarks, fellow-citizens, explanatory of the motives and feelings that have actuated me during my official term just expired, I throw myself upon the magnanimity and justice of a constituency, who, by their liberal sanction and distinguished support, have imparted to me increased incentives to fidelity in re-commencing my labors.

Discarding, then, the recollection of past dissensions, and looking forward only to the best measures of conducting our public affairs to a successful termination, I enter upon the new administration with a determination to meet, as far as I can, the just expectations of a people who have done me signal honor, and whom I can best repay by exerting whatever of qualification I may be able to command in the promotion of their best interests. This qualification I shall endeavor to seek in a proper intelligence to discern, discretion to execute, and industry to fulfill every duty intrusted.

Having already, in my late message to the Legislature and in other previous communications, given my views in relation to what I conceived to be the most important subjects connected with the general policy of the State, and having made such suggestions touching the same as my judgment approved, it is therefore unnecessary, and would perhaps be deemed out of place for me again to advert to them on this occasion.

Let it be sufficient for me to repeat that, with the constitution and laws as my guide, it will be my constant aim to preserve, as far as my agency will allow, all the great fundamental principles which the framers of our State charter intended to secure and perpetuate. Entertaining a profound reverence for the constitution of the United States, constituting—as it was intended to do by those who framed it—the foundation of our national peace and strength, I shall consider it my duty, as it will be my pleasure, to support it, “as well in its limitations as in its authorities,” and at the same time to respect the rights and authorities reserved to the States and to the people “as essential to the success of the general system.”

I cannot conclude this address without expressing to you who are now present, and to my fellow-citizens generally, my heartfelt congratulations upon the prosperous condition of our young State. To me, the contrast between what Texas now is and

what she was in 1836, is indeed most striking : it is difficult to realize the great and happy change which has taken place.—Sixteen years ago, with a soul filled with the wild ardor and aspirations of boyhood, I left my well remembered and much-loved native hills to make my home in this distant land, to aid her people in their patriotic struggle for freedom. I landed with no exile's feelings on the shores that were henceforward, and for weal or woe, to be my abiding place, for I dwelt with delight upon the kind recollections of the home I left behind me and all the endearments of family associations.

A dark cloud then hung lowering over this fair land. The Lone Star shone fitful through the gloom—now beaming with the light of peace and hope—now almost quenched in blood, yet ever with a halo of glory encircling it. We have lived to see that lost Pleiad restored to its proper place among its sisters, no longer obscured by doubt or difficulty, but shining far abroad to the nations of the earth, a beacon, which every day grows brighter and more glorious. Hers was no meteor light springing from the mists of ignorance and superstition, such as faintly shines at intervals over the benighted lands of Mexico and Cuba, which gleam but for a moment only to lead the unwary to disappointment and destruction, but steady and pure like the north star, a guide to every wanderer who seeks an asylum from oppression or inexorable misfortune. Honor, eternal honor to the brave dead who offered up their lives to make Texas what she now is. Let us never forget that to them we are mainly indebted for the proud inheritance we this day enjoy.

Though the days of the Republic were “the days of our glory,” that deeds of devoted patriotism and daring chivalry were then performed which would have graced the heroic pages of Greece and Rome, it cannot be denied that she held an unenviable place amongst the nations of the world. With a sparse population, exhausted by war, it could not be otherwise.

I cannot better convey to you my feelings than by adopting the sentiment so beautifully expressed by that distinguished and highly talented patriot, the last President of the Republic, upon the solemn occasion when he pronounced, “the Republic of Texas is no more!”

“The Lone Star of Texas, which, ten years since, arose amidst clouds and fields of carnage, and obscurely shone for awhile, has culminated, and, following an inscrutable destiny, has passed on and become fixed forever in that glorious constellation which all freemen and lovers of Freedom in the world must love and adore—the American Union. Blending its rays with its

sister States, long may it continue to shine : and may a gracious Heaven smile upon this consummation of the wishes of the two Republics, now joined together in one ! May the union be perpetual ! And may it be the means of conferring benefits and blessings upon the people of all the States ! ”

It was not until Texas took her place as one of the States of the great American Union that she occupied the position which nature designed for her. From that period to the present, her onward march to power and improvement has been unexampled. Nations behold the fruition of our hopes. From every land emigrants are flocking, in welcome crowds, to partake of our prosperity. From the vine-clad hills of France and Germany, from Ireland's green shores and England's smiling fields, and from our own sister States, they swell the living tide—until the solitary plains have been made to rejoice and the wilderness to blossom as the rose. A land more fair and happy never sun viewed in his wide career ; salubrious, mild, its hills are green, its woods and prospects fair, prairies fertile ; and, to crown the whole, it is our home—the land of Liberty and all its sweets !

P. H. BELL.

The oath of office was then administered to James W. Henderson, Lieutenant-Governor elect, who delivered the following address :

Senators and Representatives :

Having been chosen by the free and voluntary suffrages of the people of this State, to fill a responsible office under the Constitution ; and having now performed the first duty imposed upon me, by taking the oath of office, I deem this an appropriate occasion to express to the Senators and Representatives of this State, and to my fellow-citizens here assembled, those feelings of profound gratitude with which I am so deeply impressed ; arising from the confidence implied by the vote which I have received, and which has elevated me to an office, requiring in the performance of its duties, talent, ability and wise experience.

For this assurance of their approbation and confidence, I return to you, their Senators and Representatives, and through you to the people of this State, my heartfelt thanks for the honor conferred upon me.

Distrusting my ability to perform at all times, the various duties imposed upon the presiding officer of the Senate, in such a manner as will give entire satisfaction to all, I shall enter upon the discharge of these duties with extreme caution and diffi-

dence; knowing as I do, that the office has been filled with distinguished ability and experience by my predecessor. Yet, I may hope with the aid and co-operation of experienced Senators, to observe and enforce the rules which that body may adopt for its government. Should I be able to perform this with promptitude, impartiality and satisfaction to the Senate, I shall have accomplished all that I could reasonably desire.

No matter how deeply I may be committed to any given policy, the nature of the office I hold, and its duties prescribed by the Constitution, would admonish me, that it is no part of my duty, nor would it become me on this occasion, to express my views in relation to the various subjects recently discussed before the people of this State, and now presented to the Legislature by his Excellency, the Governor. I must be allowed therefore to pass them until such time as I may have an occasion to express my opinions with the sanction of the Constitution and in the discharge of my official duties.

Nevertheless, I may be permitted to offer to the Senators and Representatives of Texas, and to my fellow-citizens, my sincere congratulations upon the happy and prosperous condition of all the States of this now glorious Union.

May that Union, the pride and boast of every American citizen, continue to command the admiration of the civilized world. May it stand forever as an imperishable monument, perpetuating the wisdom, valor and patriotism of those great and good men who brought it into existence.

Allow me also to congratulate you upon the positive assurances every where given by the American people, to maintain the integrity of the Union, and to preserve, sacred and inviolate, their Federal Constitution; showing upon all occasions their resolute determination to bear aloft through all time the flag of the Union—that proud emblem of American greatness—and to transmit it to posterity, with all its glorious associations; unimpaired by time; unsullied by dishonor; unstained by disunion.

Whilst these prospects are gratifying to us as citizens of the great Republic, we have, as citizens of Texas, equal cause to rejoice in the vast improvements which are every where presented throughout the broad limits of our own State. When we contrast our present condition, social, moral and political, with that of a few years past, we are astonished at our rapid advancement; and look back with the deepest interest to the time when Texas, without organization and without means, yet impelled by a strong sense of the value and blessings of liberty,

dissolved her political connection with Mexico, and established an independent Republican Government, under the most trying and discouraging circumstances that ever befel an oppressed and resisting people.

Yes! at a time when Texas, without a dollar in her military chest, not a bayonet bristling in her ranks; with the hopes of her people depressed by the atrocities committed upon her citizens and soldiers; when the homes of her citizens were in flames; when her soldiers lay butchered upon the ill-fated plains of Goliad, and around the desolated walls of the Alamo—nay, at a time when the progress of desolation and hostility marked the track of the invader, as visibly as if the besom of destruction had swept over the land; the hearts of the people failed not; and they met in convention to deliberate upon the affairs of Texas.

Their deliberations soon ripened into action; and they declared to the world that Texas was free, sovereign and independent.

To sustain these resolves, her patriotic sons repaired to her army, then but a handful—the bold issues were soon met by the invader—and on the plains of San Jacinto, the gallant men of Texas redeemed the pledge of their country.

The gallantry and patriotism of that little army won the plaudits of their countrymen, the blessings of their country-women and the admiration of the civilized world; and for their country a name and renown which has not been tarnished by her subsequent career.

Since that day the prosperity of Texas has been steadily advancing; her march has been onward, until we now behold her happy and prosperous, and rejoicing in the bountiful blessings of a kind and beneficent providence.

With a population not less intelligent, energetic and patriotic than those of the oldest States of the confederacy; with a territory almost boundless in extent; with a soil and climate unsurpassed by any country on this continent: blest with a rich and varied soil, watered by innumerable streams, serving for the delight and accommodation of her inhabitants; and producing with but little labor all the necessities and luxuries of life; almost encircled by navigable waters, forming a kind of chain around her borders as if to bind together an Empire State; and with noble rivers running at convenient distances through her entire limits; susceptible of becoming highways for the cheap, easy and convenient communication of her citizens, and for the transportation of her surplus produce to her sister States, or to the great industrial emporiums of commercial Europe.

Possessing these natural advantages, if true to herself, it requires no prophetic ken to foresee that the future career of Texas will be as rapid in developing her vast resources, as her past history has been successful and brilliant.

The many fiery trials through which she has passed, has resulted in achieving her independence; and has indicated her present enviable position in the grand galaxy of the Federal Union.

Trusting that she will continue to pursue that policy which will eventually develop her great natural resources and advantages; which will maintain her proud position as one of the States of the Federal Union; guard and protect the interest of those who, in her early struggles, periled their all in her behalf; redeem her revolutionary obligations upon the most exalted principles of equity, and do ample and full justice to all those who aided her in her dark and perilous days of adversity; maintaining through all time to come, a character for justice, honor and liberality towards those pure and exalted patriots who were ever ready to lay their lives upon the altar of liberty; ambitious only to perpetuate the sacred principles of equality and freedom, and transmit to their country a name worthy of their exalted patriotism and disinterested sacrifices.

Entertaining a firm belief, that the great interests of the State will be watched with a sleepless vigilance by those whom a common constituency have chosen, in the person of the chief Executive and the Honorable Senators and Representatives of the present Legislature; I pledge them a hearty co-operation in all things connected with the limited sphere in which it is my duty to act, as Lieut. Governor of the State. JAMES W. HENDERSON.

The Senate returned to their chamber, and the Hon. John A. Greer took leave of the Senate in an appropriate address, and the Hon. James W. Henderson took the chair.

Mr. Eddy offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the thanks of the Senate be tendered to the Hon John A. Greer, late Lieutenant Governor of the State, and *ex officio* President of the Senate, for the able, dignified and impartial manner in which he has discharged the duties of President of the Senate, and that we will look back with unfeigned pleasure upon the time during which we have, with so much harmony, indulged in social intercourse with him and each other.

Resolved, further, That the Secretary of the Senate be requested to furnish the Hon. John A. Greer with a copy of the foregoing resolution.

On motion, the Senate adjourned until 10 o'clock to morrow morning.